

The Meadow. April 6<sup>th</sup> 1918.

Annie  
Henry  
arriving old  
The Drummer  
The women  
programme  
is a sound  
patrol  
one. but  
they could  
let it over

My darling Mary,

I am so awfully pleased to have your dear letter of Jan. 28<sup>th</sup> written at Lindisfarne - it brings you so close to me, and is such a comfort - only it does make me long so to see you and to have you near, so that we could talk to each other - more & more ones nearest & dearest are to one as the circle gets smaller and on these terrible times one's ~~need~~ need is to draw all ones beloved together, & in a circle as it were, to face all the grief & loss & terror that is drawing ever closer and closer; & to confirm each other's memories of times of happiness which now seem so far off as to belong to a former existence. All good, & beauty, & sunshine, & peace & gaiety, & well-being, seem quite shadowy things now, don't they? & when I think of our days in youth in Tasmania, they all seem lit by sunshine, & colour & warmth of feeling and emotion, & scents & sounds & sights of beauty and intelligence. I envy sometimes those whose lot it was to slip away before these tarnished blackened days came over us and our beloved Country, & all that we meant when we thought of England. You will all be looking on & feeling as breathless as we are over this renewed terrible struggle on the Western front. These awful

munition sent from all the different districts & factories, nurses' orders, Drs, everything. I do  
of men & wounded soldiers in the audience. Very good speaking by the wonderful Parkhill  
mother?  
Christabel



so much higher & I do want them to. not just to be swept into the men's parties as so many

Casualty lists Harry - They have begun to come in now in full force, all these last 2 weeks we have known they must come on the end: it is 1914 over again, only so much worse. because now everyone other & last ~~one~~ are going. ~~also~~ Anyway if we can only keep them from getting Arrions (which we mean a straight-run thro' to Paris & the coast) and now we do seem to have stayed their Irish just for the time. but at such a cost! The country they've taken matters little, as it is a God-forsaken strip of stony shell holes, no railways, no roads, no villages (all destroyed by the Hun himself) no billets, no food or wine or women, & so is a fit place to leave the Boche in. & as our Army keeps on withstanding them that is all that matters for the time - but it is such deplorable anxious work for us all isn't it? The new man-power Bill will take men up to 50 now, & all over 18. and at last an attempt is to be made to conscript Ireland, where there are thousands of strong young men between 20 & 30 who wait do anything but take ~~the~~ our men's billets & money, while they are giving their lives for the Empire. I don't know how any men can go on keeping out of it all as the Irish have, all these years - it seems to me inexplicable - who will be Ireland's friends after the war? Not even the Germans I should think.

Well, decent, it is such a tremendous relief & blessing that Walter is not in the fighting this spring. he is a lot better but has only passed out of Hospital into TB (now, which means Foreign Garrison Duty. ~~abroad~~ for France) and he has been waiting at his Regt. H Quarters at Felixstowe for some weeks now for orders. & this weekend



more votes - the Moni Parties haven't done much, but bring us to the awful state of things, we want a new spirit - a new set of ideals, not this awful money grab ideal. don't we? men are such short range ideals.

he has got 3 days leave, so we are rejoicing to look upon his face once more for a bit, & he looks well - is not so depressed & low as he was last time; he is quite hopeful about the war - as he believes the advances of the Bochs will be but temporary & says nothing matters but that we should keep the Army intact and keep sending out more drafts. Jexell-Bernard will have left by now, as I'm sure all the trained men will be hurried over now as we have to appeal for them all round. I know exactly how he feels about the Camp & Hosp: conditions with regard to drink & other evils, it is awful - very bad here too. It seems inseparable from large gatherings of men; but what an awful achony pity it is - they seem to have so little control of themselves & their senses. I was told, Rati's husband went back (after a month's leave) last week right into the thick of it. his Battery was lost, & had not been heard of, it was at Cambrai when he left & of course had been swept back miles, if any of them are left at all which the War Office seemed to doubt. I don't think there will be a man left of any of our best English breed. most of the old families & the gentlefolk class have lost all their young men by now. three or four sons out of each family. it is heartrending to read the Times notices & how so much good stuff is ~~going~~ falling, all their fine education & qualities wasted. Our poor Mayor, Leonard Sutton, has just lost his 4<sup>th</sup> son. he had 5 fighting, all gone now but the 5<sup>th</sup> son, in Mesopotamia



Well my dearest I must stop now, have lots more to say but no more time & you will be sick of reading my  
screwed. I must tell you what a real grief the loss of our dear old "B" was to us - it all seemed

& each year of the war he has lost a son.  
Poor Rita is of course terribly anxious about Ivan. He has  
written once since he went back from Boulogne - but he  
then got orders to proceed to an unknown destination  
of country, & she hasn't heard since; he could hear nothing  
at all of his Battery, & is very much distressed, as  
he fears they must either all be killed, or all prisoners, &  
it's awful for the boy, as he has lived in the closest intimacy  
with these other officers by day & night for 2 years; & then to  
go back & find them all gone - wiped out from his life  
& theirs, as it were - it's an awful thought. Rita  
expects ~~the~~ an arrival on August. "going to have  
a baby bruzzer in summer" as Beryl puts it - she  
always adds "Bruzzer John". I do hope it will be  
a "bruzzer". & that Rita will be all right, she hasn't been  
a bit well this time, sickness & aches & pains & great fatigue  
& faintness, & teeth all going wrong. She says she's sore  
it's a boy, it's behaving so badly! The rationed food  
makes us all feel rather weak & seedy, & on Reading  
especially we are very severely rationed, in meat, tea,  
butter, bacon, cheese, etc., and the few un-rationed  
foods are bought up by a crowd of alien Jews from  
the East of London who have come down on Reading  
& all the places along the river, Maidenhead, Henley,  
etc. to escape the air raids in London. They have  
settled down on us like a swarm of locusts! Taken  
every room & house, & even bought the houses, over the  
heads of the tenants & turned them out, & filled every  
place, 17 or 18 persons in each house. Their men folk travel



(3)  
up to London every day with season tickets & return  
each evening - it's most dreadful. as they are  
anything but clean or sanitary, & have swarm of  
dirty children - fat wives - they are rolling in money  
& outbid all the ordinary inhabitants of these  
places for every commodity - This is one of the  
small secondary effects of war, but it is a very trying  
one. the small worries are sometimes almost hardest  
to bear aren't they? & one feels that these people ought to  
be either interned, or returned to their own countries  
or else made to serve in a Foreign Legion - it's too hard  
to see them swarming over the land, taking the bullets  
& pay of our poor boys, & coining money by trading  
& raising prices on our own people! The Govt has been  
& is lamentably feeble in their dealings with these aliens  
who are eating us up & would be a real danger in  
case of acids or an invasion - they are creeping in  
all through the land. next door to our place is a nice  
little house & garden which is let to a German family  
called Schwartz. they have just this month changed  
their name to Scott & now expect to be considered  
English! many of the people raised here have called  
on them not knowing or not caring about their nationality  
Aren't the English an extraordinary race?!

Well dearest, about Dorwent Wood - his work. he's  
been doing most wonderful things. as you know by that  
article in XIX<sup>th</sup> Century. he has lots of other artists helping  
too but I'm sure there must be room for all helpers to

So sad & such a sacrifice to that selfish husband. May Woolf may have been so kind in writing to us & in doing  
her best for poor B in her last few weeks of suffering. She was such a dear old friend to us all, & always wanted to  
come to Eng.



Cope with all the sad cases there are; & especially  
anyone like you who are good at modelling  
& colour & patient in working. I'm going to try  
& find out more about it for you. The only thing  
is I don't believe they will allow women to travel  
on the liners now, will they? May, (Sammy's  
widow) tried to come from New Zealand last  
year but they would not give her a permit & even  
sent back some ladies who had got as far as  
the Cape. I will ask Amy Lambert about it, as  
the Lamberts are very intimate with the Denwent  
Woods: it would be lovely if you could come home  
& help with that. I'm sure you would be able to  
do it well. I told you, didn't I? That George  
Lambert has been sent to Palestine to paint  
for the Australian Record Office; he is simply loving  
it, and hopes to get an extension of the time  
as it was only to be 3 months originally, but  
as it took him such a long time to get out there  
of course it's no good his coming back so soon. He  
has done some hundreds of sketches & paintings  
& is delighted with the light & picturesqueness of it all.  
Meanwhile his eldest boy Maurice is nearly 18, &  
will go onto the Flying Service soon - just fancy! when  
this war started he was 14, a kid at school, &  
so with all the boys then. Their mother said "Thanks God

P.S. Love from Harry B. specially.

and spend her old age among us & we away before that would happen. Dot of love & thoughts dear, & love  
to Ma & Betty, and the Clantons. Your loving friend always,  
H. C. C.



(4)

our boys are too young ever to have to go & fight in this war" and now - they are all having to go, still it is not over. Our College is just hanging on the balance now. as the Royal Air Service (as it is called now & the old RFC) wants to take over the whole of the buildings & turn us out; they have most of our rooms as it is, & all our men's Hostels, the Big Hall, the whole of the Art department, the Education Block, & the Physics Block & all the recreation grounds. in the Agric Dept we have no lecture room left - & only one Practical class room - but still we carry on ~~over~~ <sup>train - turn out</sup> over 100 people per session for the land & gardening & Dairy. Of course if it is necessary no one would wish to say a word, but it does seem a pity, as once dispersed it would be difficult to get the Staff & eventually together again. There are over 100 members of Staff to start with, covering all Faculties - Science, Art, Education, Classics, & Agric: & ~~the~~ Horti: the Horti: the Dairy Institute as well. Also we have a very large munition training school in the Coll: now. Training women & men as machine tool-setters, & we have turned out 400 in the last two years for factories all over England, about 1/3 of them being ~~ex-~~ discharged soldiers. We shall know our fate soon, but I fancy shall be left alone for the next



term anyway which is the last of the session.  
 I don't feel I mind very much one way or the other, as  
 I'm sure another job will be waiting for me, & I've  
 often wished I could be free to do something which seems  
 closer to the war, than just carrying on training young  
 folks for the land, etc. I should love to do munition  
 like Lillie Reed, or some pathological bacteriology  
 in France, or the modelling for Derwent Woods kind  
 of work, or anything like that. only of course I am  
 not really free on account of Mary & our home here  
 & the other Anne & the little family here. However if  
 it is to happen it will, & that makes me feel it will  
 be all right any way. I do want you to read  
 Benjamin Kidd's The Science of Power. it is  
 such a wonderful book. he wrote Social Evolution  
 25 years ago & has been having a big think all this  
 time apparently. (S.E. is a splendid book too.) his  
 ideas fit in so ~~good~~ very interestingly now. I could  
 help thinking so when Mary & I were at the big meeting  
 of the Women's Party to celebrate the gaining of the  
 Vote the other day in the Albert Hall, it was all so  
 inspiring & wonderful, I did wish you'd been there.  
 I was one of the Stewards & my place was in the Upper  
 Orchestra. such a marvellous lot of different women  
 & the various uniforms. WAACS. WITNS. Police  
 Women, (a grand type) Agric. Women. Land Army